

# Know Your Rights: Lost Slaves, Proving Freedom, and Earning Pensions in 19th Century Maryland



*Presented by*  
**Tanner Sparks, Allison Seyler, and  
Alex Champion**

**Hosted by the:**

Maryland State Archives  
350 Rowe Blvd.  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**SATURDAY May 18, 2013  
10 AM to 12 PM**

**Free Admission  
Seating Is Limited  
Reservations Are Required**

**To reserve, please contact:**

Jennifer Ruberti  
Phone: 410-260-6493  
Email:  
[jennifer.ruberti@maryland.gov](mailto:jennifer.ruberti@maryland.gov)  
(preferred)

Alex, Allison, and Tanner will discuss current research efforts of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland Project. Each speaker will focus on a different record that illuminates how slaves and slave owners navigated the legal system. Alex will explore Petitions for Freedom, unearthing stories of slaves who argued for freedom in the Maryland court. Allison will detail Petitions for Fugitive Slaves, assessing the impact of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 in Maryland. And Tanner will examine United States Colored Troops Soldiers' Pension Records, revealing stories of slaves and free blacks who fought in the Civil War.



## *ABOUT the LECTURERS*

Alex Champion earned a BA in History and a Masters of Library and Information Studies with a specialization in archives from the University of Wisconsin--Madison. He is currently a HistoryMakers IMLS fellow placed at the Maryland State Archives' Legacy of Slavery in Maryland program where he focuses on slave freedom petitions.

Allison Seyler received her B.A. in History and French from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Allison also completed her Masters in Historical Studies with a concentration in public history at UMBC. She currently works as a research archivist on the Legacy of Slavery Project at the Archives. She conducts historical research on the lives of slaves and slave-owners from Maryland, bringing to light their relationships and revealing slaves' paths towards freedom.

Tanner Sparks has been working at the Maryland State Archives as a research archivist with the Legacy of Slavery Project in Maryland since August 2011 and before that as a volunteer and intern. His primary research at the state archives has been the U.S. Colored Troops pension files, as they offer insight into slavery, military service, emancipation, and postwar civilian life. He was born on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and grew up in Chestertown in Kent County. After high school, he earned a B.A. and M.A. in history from Salisbury University.



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